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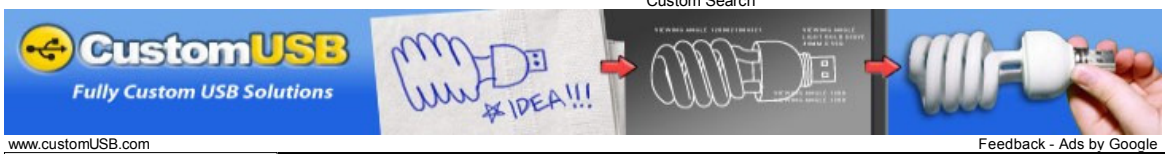

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Product: CS661
Manufacturer: Aten
Supplied by: Aten
Price: NA
Launch Date: NA

Do you have any problem for controlling or data transferring between two systems? If yes then KVM is one of your solutions and today we will have a look on Aten latest KVM switch; CS661. Aten CS661 is USB KVM switch which is purposely designed for laptop users and so far it is still quite hard to find such innovative product in market yet.

Company Profile

ATEN Simply Better Connections

For more than two decades, ATEN has earned a sterling reputation for delivering the finest KVM (keyboard/video/mouse) and remote connectivity solutions to manage servers and other network devices. Today we stand as the largest KVM manufacturer in the world.

ATEN has developed over the years a broad range of solutions to meet the needs of key market niches, including small - and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) and enterprise organizations through its ALTUSEN line of KVM products. Leveraging its leading-edge ASIC technology and VSE patents, ATEN's KVM and remote connectivity solutions offer the most comprehensive features and functionality than the competition. The ASIC chip is one of the company's unique differentiators, as it drives the product line's capabilities, and ensures reliability and quality.

Features

- USB-to-USB Laptop USB KVM Switch with File Transfer functionality and USB 2.0 support
- KVM functionality (dual PC control) - allows you to control both your Local laptop/computer and a Remote laptop/computer via the Local computer
- One port USB 2.0 hub built in - allows the Local computer to connect to USB 2.0 peripherals
- Compact design, built-in all-in-one USB 2.0 cables - enables high-speed data transfer
- Intuitive GUI for easy operation
- File system management utility allows you to transfer files between two laptops/computers - simply drag and drop
- Plug and play - installation software is auto-run
- Desktop scaling - user can adjust the size/resolution of the Remote desktop window by size or ratio
- Non-powered

Specifications

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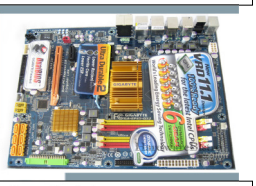

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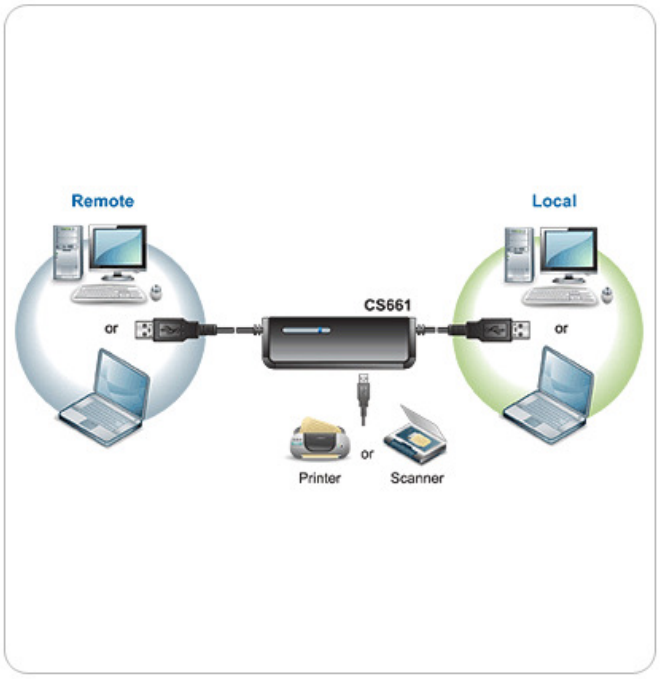
Computer Connections		1 to 1
Connectors	Local Port	1 x USB Type A Male (Black)
	Remote Port	1 x USB Type A Male (Black)
LEDs	On Line Data Transfer	2 (Blue)
USB Hub		1 x USB 2.0 Port
Environment	Operating Temp.	0 - 50°C
	Storage Temp.	-20 - 60°C
	Humidity	0 - 80% RH, Non-condensing
Physical Properties	Housing	Plastic
	Weight	98 g
	Dimensions (L x W x H)	9.20 x 3.10 x 1.40 cm

Diagram



Package & Contents

Aten CS661 laptop USB KVM switch comes with a pretty nice looking packaging box and the whole KVM dongle can be seen through from outside which looks much more attractive. Besides that the packaging box is a bit 3D where users can feel its thickness by touching the dongle without unpack the packaging box.

At the back of the packaging box, there is a diagram showing how does the CS661 work and its features in Multilanguage too. Besides the KVM dongle, Aten also includes some standard accessories like user's manual, quick start guide and as well as a carrying pouch.

The carrying pouch is a good quality and great accessory for Aten CS661 as this KVM switch is designed for laptop users so carrying this KVM dongle around is expected hence Aten made a wise move to include this carrying pouch. For the documentation, there are two guides; quick start guide (very brief document with Multilanguage) and user's manual (only in English but very detail).

Aten CS661 Laptop USB KVM Switch

The whole unit of Aten CS661 dongle's dimension and weight are around 9.2 x 3.1 x 1.4 cm (L x W x H) and 98 grams. This is one of the smallest and lightest KVM switch that so far we have seen and these factors are important as Aten CS661 is targeting for laptop users. Basically Aten CS661 is a very simple and nice looking KVM switch without any fancy stuff.

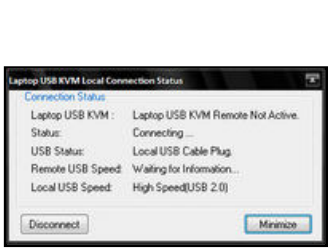
As you can see both ends of the Aten CS661 are having some long USB cables which looks very confusing but it can be identified easily by using these two methods; the cable length or USB port. Left side USB cable (1.8M) is for conencting to remote system and right side USB cable (0.9M) is for connecting to local system (or HOST system). Besides that the on the USB port itself, Aten has added the "Local", "Remote" wording so that users can identify them easily. The cable length of Aten CS661 is pretty long enough as total 1.8+0.9M=2.7M is very sufficient for connecting two laptops or one laptop and one desktop.

Aten CS661 comes with black body which is made by plastic material but the dongle built quality is very solid and outstanding finishing. On the most left top corner, there is small row of transparent window which has two blue LEDs to indicate the system connectivity and activity. If there is only one system is connected, it will only light up one LED and when during accessing like copying or being remote, both LED will keep on blinking.

If you have seen some KVM switch before then you may wonder why this Aten CS661 looks like totally different than normal KVM as Aten CS661 has missing some components like DVI or Analog display port and USB ports. This is because CS661 is for laptop rather than desktop and laptop will have their own LCD, keyboard and mouse so in Aten CS661, these ports are eliminated in order to keep it as simple as possible and cost competitive as well. However Aten still includes one USB port which located on the middle of the Aten CS661 dongle switch. This USB port is used for sharing USB peripherals like printer, scanner and etc USB device.

Installation, Testing & Performance

You may notice that Aten CS661 doesn't come with any driver or software CD but actually the driver/software is loaded inside the KVM dongle itself which is pretty interesting and good. Once the local system is connected the driver and software will be installed automatically on the local system.


Laptop USB KVM Local Connection Status
Connection Status
Laptop USB KVM : Laptop USB KVM Remote Not Active.
Status: Connecting ...
USB Status: Local USB Cable Plug
Remote USB Speed: Waiting for Information...
Local USB Speed: High Speed(USB 2.0)
Disconnect
Minimize

After the installation is completed, it will prompt users to reboot the system however this is not required as stated in Aten CS661 quick start guide but we still found that it is required to reboot the remote system else it will keep on showing waiting for information from the remote system. Everything looks good and working perfectly once the remote system is rebooted and you will able to find a CS661 drive in your "My Computer".

Test Bed A

Notebook : Dell Inspiron E1720

Processor : Intel Mobile Core 2 Duo T7500
Memory : 4GB HyperX 666MHz DDR2 Memory
Hard Drive : 120GB 2.5" 5400RPM 8MB Seagate
Graphic Card : Nvidia GeForce 8400M GS
Optical Drive : DVD RW
Operating System : Microsoft Window XP SP2

Test Bed B

Notebook : Dell Latitude D620
Processor : Intel Mobile Core 2 Duo T7500
Memory : 4GB 666MHz DDR2 Memory
Hard Drive : 120GB 2.5" 5400RPM 8MB Seagate
Optical Drive : DVD RW
Operating System : Microsoft Window XP SP2

Here is the user friendly GUI of Aten CS661 and basically there are only five buttons which looks simple and users should understand/master them just in a minute; Open File Transfer, Toggle Full Screen Mode, Minimize Remote Screen, Send Start to Remote and Match/Restore Remote Screen. Basically only the first function will be useful for file transferring as the rest of the functions are just additional GUI functions only. The Screen above is a remote system display on a local system; it works very similar with Microsoft Remote Desktop Connection.

Here is the Open File Transfer function of Aten CS661; left hand side is the local system while right hand side is the remote system. The file copying or transferring is much easy with this Aten CS661 than transferring them using USB flash drive or network which is slow and troublesome. Users can use the drag/drop or send/receive functions for file transferring and the file transfer progress can be tracked from the progress bar.

The latest CS661 AP upgrade utility can be downloaded from Aten website or double click on the AP upgrade utility when CS661 is connected to the local system.

Conclusion

Aten CS661 is an unique KVM switch which is purposely created for laptop users for remote control and easy file transferring between two systems. It works quite similar as a Microsoft Remote Desktop Connection compare with ordinary desktop KVM switch but Aten CS661 will be much faster especially for file transferring. Besides that Aten CS661 also comes with compact size which is ideally for laptop users to carrying this KVM switch around. We'll recommend this Aten CS661 KVM switch to those require data transferring oftenly as this KVM switch is able to eliminate the hassles of media data transferring like USB flash drive or external HDD.

Pros:

* Compact design
* Control dual PC
* Easily & fast file transfer functionality
* Simple plug & play; no hassle setup
* User friendly GUI

Cons:

* None

Thanks to Aten for providing this sample for us to review.

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